

Tapped Out

Order of the Arrow 1952



1949 Order of the Arrow Tap Out Dorris Goodman and Louis Pritchett "With arms raised"

The Order of the Arrow was founded in 1915 at the Philadelphia Scout Camp, Treasure Island. The Chickasaw Council held its first OA Tap Out August 7th 1948 at Kamp Kia Kima Hardy, Arkansas. An OA team from the Itawamba, MS Lodge tapped out 30 candidates. Among these Charter Members were our scoutmaster, Buddy Irwin, and Ole 97 Eagle Scouts, Dorris Goodman and Louis Pritchett.

February 1949, Buddy Irwin, Louis Pritchett and Ernest Maynard drove to Saint Louis, Missouri, to observe the Missouri State OA Expo. They wanted to observe Indian dancing, costumes and where they got them. In April 1949 the Chickasaw Council installed Order of the Arrow Lodge #553. Both Dorris and Lou were OA Indian dancers. Through the summers they were on the Kia Kima Staff 1948 - 1953.

This story is dedicated to my Grandson, Nicholas E. Osborn; he was tapped out in June 2010. My son, David E. Osborn, was tapped out in 1982, and attained the Brotherhood Honor in 1984. I was tapped out in 1952 and attained the Brotherhood Honor in 1954.

By: Audrey E. "Umpy" Osborn, March, 2006 Revised June, 2010

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A brotherhood exists among those who exhibit the Scout Promise and Scout Law

By 1952 I had accumulated five weeks of summer camp at Kia Kima. The biggest event for me each week would be the Friday night camp fire. The campfire offered something for everyone. Camp songs like "The Titanic" and "Them Bones", skits and big events like unit five (the 14 -16 year old Camp Miramichee Girls) were favorites. The Indian Dancers were an exciting close to each campfire. Everyone wanted to see Lou Pritchett, Dorris Goodman and other staff, perform dances, with feathers flying, bells giggling and their dusty moccasin feet keeping time to the booming drum beats.

The campfire is burning low and the Order of the Arrow tap out ceremony begins. This is an honor camper award given to a Scout or Scouter who exhibits the Scout Promise and scout Law. I was sitting next to Buddy Irwin, my scoutmaster. Nutiket, the torch bearer, and Meteu (Lou Pritchett) start the search for Order of the Arrow candidates. To a measured beat of the drum they search slowly through each row, Meteu would sometime go past a candidate, turn, then grab him and with drum beating fast give the shrill Indian yell then escort him to the front of the campfire. I was passed by two times then on the third pass I was "tapped out", my heart almost stopped. I was quickly jerked up and escorted to the other candidates. The tap out ceremony was over; it was proclaimed, "These are They", and our ordeal had begun.

We were sworn to silence and taken single file by Indian torch bearers to remote parts of the camp. Each candidate was left alone individually in the woods with only a bedroll; that night we were moved three times. Needless to say I got very little rest or sleep. At day-break a task master gave each candidate one raw egg, one slice of bread and one match. A dog stole my slice of bread and ran away. I built a fire, found a thin flat rock to scramble my egg on but the rock was not quiet level and the egg spilled on the ground. I thought about that wonderful and tasty slice of bread all day!!!

By the time our work ordeal started I was thirsty and hungry. The July sun was relentless; I was thirsty all day. All I could think about was water. Clearing and pilling rocks from the rifle range was exhausting. For lunch we got a small chunk of cheese, a cup of coffee and two cups of water. The task master then poured the rest of the water, ice and all on the ground!!! I was so thirsty; and still no one could speak a word.

That afternoon the ordeal was over but we were still sworn to silence. We took showers and dressed for dinner. While standing for prayer in the dining hall, Eddie Freiberg passed out from exhaustion. He was okay after dinner. That night we were taken to a secret OA campfire circle and in an impressive and solemn ceremony given the secret Oath, which was never to be spoken above a whisper. I was proud to have endured the testing of my ordeal and was found to be worthy to wear the arrow.

After the ceremony there was a reception and fellowship in the staff lounge with bug juice and sandwiches hosted by Frank Simonton, camp dining hall steward. I remember it was a large group attended by staff, adult leaders and Burl Burnside, Old Kamp Kia Kima, Camp Ranger. I think he had been Tapped Out earlier that summer.

Audrey E. "Umpy" Osborn - Troop Ole 97 Scout 1950 - Eagle Scout 1954